

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

November 12, 2019

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

Children succeed when they are provided with the safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments necessary for healthy development. Creating conditions for healthy child development requires policy and practice solutions to minimize parental stress and build community capacity to support families in a meaningful way.

As chief executive officers of organizations dedicated to helping children and families thrive, and as organizations providing evidence-based and research informed programs that are at the forefront of delivering services to strengthen families, we urge you to prioritize the reauthorization of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and maintain the House increase of \$90 million for CAPTA State Grants and \$75 million for the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grants in FY 2020.

In the United States, the total lifetime economic burden associated with child abuse and neglect is approximately \$2 trillion, rivaling the cost of other high-profile public health crises, such as stroke and type 2 diabetes. Child abuse and neglect affect more than one million children annually—at least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year.

Exposure to violence early in life can heighten the risk for adverse or high risk behavior later on, such as smoking, alcoholism, and substance use and addiction, mental health disorders, homelessness, early pregnancy, and criminal behavior. In fact, studies also demonstrate that dramatic increases in juvenile arrests (59%), adult criminal behavior (28%), and violent crime (30%), often are a result of child abuse and/or neglect.

Children who grow up in safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments have the best opportunity to become educated, productive, healthy and engaged citizens into adulthood. CBCAP exemplifies the best in local, voluntary, research-based policy with proven outcomes for children and families.

CBCAP is locally operated and provides funding for programs and services that build assets for two generations (parents and children). It also requires states to collaborate across agencies and with community partners, while its evidentiary standard has provided the philanthropic community with a tremendous incentive to invest in and build upon proven interventions for children.

CAPTA helps children and families in all **50 states** through services such as evidence-based voluntary home visiting programs, community-based parent support programs, early childhood and child care programs, mental and substance use services, family resource centers, and respite and crisis care, among many other valuable resources.

Unfortunately, CAPTA has been chronically under-resourced and, as a result, the law has not lived up to its potential. Properly funding CAPTA is essential to reducing the rates of child abuse and neglect in this country and reducing the huge costs associated with treating its consequences. Largely due to the opioid crisis, the number of children in foster care has risen for five consecutive years.

We were pleased to see the House unanimously pass a strong bipartisan reauthorization bill in May. If appropriately funded, the reforms in the *Stronger Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act* will reduce child abuse and neglect, strengthen families through community driven solutions, improve local responses to child trauma, increase states' child safety tools, prevent child fatalities, and bring much improved data and transparency. In April, twenty-eight Senators joined a bipartisan letter calling on appropriators "to provide appropriate and robust resources to CAPTA." It is vital the Senate move forward with its reauthorization process so a bill can be finalized this session of Congress.

Jerry Milner, Commissioner of the Children's Bureau said, "We need to change the focus on child welfare to primary prevention of maltreatment and unnecessary removal of children from their families. We can only break the cycle of family disruption and maltreatment by addressing the root causes of those situations." Reauthorizing and increasing appropriations for CAPTA offers us a crucial opportunity to do just that.

We are united in asking Congress to swiftly reauthorize and maintain the House funding level increases for this important program with additional resources. Thank you for your commitment to the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect, and to improving the lives of children and families in the United States.

Sincerely,



Susan Dreyfus, President & CEO  
Alliance for Strong Families and Communities



Mark Del Monte, JD CEO/Executive Vice President  
American Academy of Pediatrics



Dr. Janet Rosenzweig, Executive Director  
American Professional Society on the Abuse of  
Children



Dora E Maya PhD. President & CEO  
Arden Shore Child and Family Services



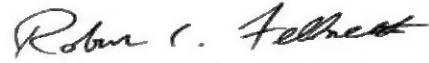
Frank Farrow, President  
Center for the Study of Social Policy



Dr. B. Angeloe Burch, Sr., Chairperson Board of  
Directors  
Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Inc.



Christine James-Brown, President/CEO  
Child Welfare League of America



Robert Fellmeth, Executive Director  
Children's Advocacy Institute

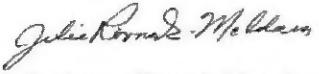


Christie Appelhanz, Executive Director  
Children's Alliance of Kansas



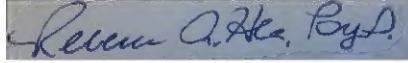
Michelle M. Sanborn, MSW, President  
Children's Alliance of Kentucky

  
Max Lesko, National Executive Director  
Children's Defense Fund

  
Julie Anne Rivnak-McAdam, Administrative  
Coordinator  
Circle of Parents, Inc.

  
Colleen Oliver, CEO  
Committee for Children

  
Bob Wilson  
DCCH Center for Children and Families

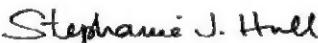
  
Rebecca A. Hea, Psy.D.  
Denver Children's Home

  
Jetta Bernier  
Enough Abuse Campaign

  
Sarah Rittling, Executive Director  
First Five Years Fund

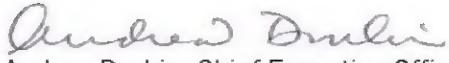
  
Bruce Lesley, President  
First Focus Campaign for Children

  
Esta Soler  
Futures Without Violence

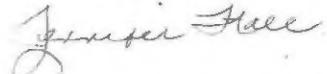
  
Stephanie J. Hull, Ph.D., President & CEO  
Girls Inc.

  
Mary Pat Lee, Executive Director  
Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery

  
Christina Murphy MA, LPC, CPP, NCC - President/CEO  
Griffith Centers for Children, Chins Up

  
Andrea Durbin, Chief Executive Officer  
Illinois Collaboration on Youth

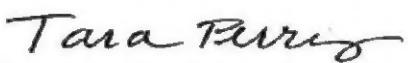
  
Kathy Grzelak, Executive Director  
Kaleidoscope

  
Jennifer Hall, Executive Director  
Key Assets Kentucky

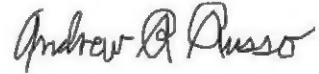
  
Judy Lambeth, CEO  
Maryhurst

  
Teresa Rafael, MSW, Executive Director  
National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention  
Funds

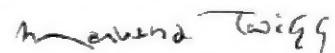
  
Jesse Hahnel, Executive Director  
National Center for Youth Law

  
Tara Perry, Chief Executive Officer  
National Court Appointed Special Advocate/Guardian  
ad Litem Association

  
Jeannette Pai-Espinosa, President  
National Crittenton

  
Andrew Russo, Co-Founder & Director  
National Family Support Network

  
Jill Kagan, CEO & Director  
National Respite Coalition

  
Marvena Twigg, President & CEO  
National Youth Advocate Program, Inc.

Frank Daidone, Executive Director  
Nurse-Family Partnership

Dr. Lisa Pion-Berlin  
Parents Anonymous

Constance Gully, President and CEO  
Parents as Teachers

Dr. Melissa Merrick, President & CEO  
Prevent Child Abuse America

Jill Seyfred, Executive Director  
Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky

Linda E Johnson, Executive Director  
Prevent Child Abuse Vermont

Rachel Davis, Executive Director  
Prevention Institute

Arnold F Fege, President  
Public Advocacy for Kids

Scott Berkowitz, President  
RAINN

Fr. Robert Smith, Dean, President, Chief Executive  
Officer  
Saint Francis Ministries

Molly Ramirez, CEO  
Shiloh House

Katie Olse, CEO  
Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services

Lori Poland  
The National Foundation to End Child Abuse and  
Neglect

Darci Halfman, Executive Director  
TN Alliance for Children and Families

Bradley Thomas, Chief Executive Officer  
Triple P America, Inc.

Schyler Baber, ED  
Voice for Adoption

Jill May, Executive Director  
WA Association for Children and Families

Katrina Harmon, Executive Director  
West Virginia Child Care Association

Kathy Markland, Executive Director  
Wisconsin Association of Family & Children's  
Agencies

Kevin Washington, CEO  
YMCA of the USA

Matthew E. Melmed, Executive Director  
ZERO TO THREE